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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 002388

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/SPG AND AF/SE
NSC FOR COURVILLE AND SHORTLEY

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SUBJECT: DARFUR: MINAWI DESCRIBES PRIORITIES, NCP
MACHINATIONS

REF: KHARTOUM 02381

Classified By: A/MGT Counselor Louis Nelli, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: In separate meetings with USG officials and the Darfur Partners Group on September 27, Senior Assistant to the President Minni Minawi outlined five priorities for constructing a peaceful solution to the Darfur conflict in the next 90 days, discussed the role of the international community in solving the crisis, and described the recent machinations of National Congress Party (NCP) leaders on the establishment of the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority (TDRA). End summary.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT 90 DAYS

¶2. (SBU) In a September 27 briefing for Chief of Mission-level representatives of the Darfur Partners Group, Minawi underscored his commitment to the DPA. "We will maintain this agreement forever and will implement it," said Minawi. "The problem is that we're alone." He then outlined a set of five priorities for advancing a peaceful solution to the Darfur crisis within the next 90 days:

- Intensify efforts to bring non-signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA)
- Prevent the collapse of the DPA through more robust support from the international community.
- Facilitate stronger implementation of the AMIS mandate in Darfur. (Note: According to Minawi, the DPA empowers the AU to disarm combatants, protect internally-displaced persons (IDPs) and civilians, and ensure the safety of its own forces. End note.)
- Neutralize the support of neighboring countries for the National Redemption Front (NRF) to encourage their participation in the cease-fire and ensure the safety of humanitarian operations. (Note: Minawi claimed that arms imports have increased since the DPA was signed. End note.)
- Affect a reconciliation within the local population of Darfur through dialogue and development programs, particularly in North Darfur.

¶3. (SBU) Minawi said that the non-signatories must drop their demand that the Janjaweed be disarmed as a pre-requisite to accession to the DPA. He reported that Janjaweed have been transferred among the military, security services, and police, making them more difficult to identify and bogging down peace efforts.

¶4. (C) In a later meeting on September 27 with the CDA, visiting AF/SPG Director Landis, and AID Mission Director

Almquist, Minawi said that he had sent an SLM military delegation to meet with the NRF in North Darfur. The mission stalled, however, following UNSYG Special Representative Jan Pronk's September 18 statement that the DPA was "comatose." Minawi said that the delegation would proceed on September 28 to discuss the humanitarian and security situation as well as inter-tribal relations. (Note: In a September 25 discussion with the Embassy Security Advisor, Minawi blamed the military delegation's delay on Suleiman Jamous and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) manipulation that has caused NRF internal bickering, not Pronk's statement (reftel). End note.)

ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

15. (C) Minawi called on the Darfur Partners Group and the international community to publicize NRF attacks in stronger terms and said that this would encourage the Cease-fire Commission to act. He also indicated that a decrease in NRF attacks would undermine the Sudanese government's justification for a military campaign. "We need your voice," he said, referring to the international community. Minawi emphasized the importance of showing his constituents and the non-signatories the tangible benefits of his participation in the DPA to shore-up support for it. He elaborated on this point during his meeting with USG officials and said that the best method to bring in non-signatories was to address the humanitarian situation and the issue of IDPs through development aid and the TDRA's compensation fund. "Without money, without support, no one will hear what I'm saying." Almquist urged Minawi to conduct a realistic needs assessment as a basis for discussion with the international community

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and the USG.

NCP MACHINATIONS ON THE TDRA

16. (C) Minawi told the USG officials that he was frustrated with the lack of progress on the TDRA. "Everything is in the President's hands--not the TDRA, not traditional powers in Darfur," he said. He had presented a proposal to Bashir several weeks ago on the structure of the TDRA. In response, Presidential Advisor Maghzoub Al Khalifa gave Minawi a counter-proposal that was "unacceptable." When Minawi objected, he was told to wait until after Bashir returned from the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on September 23. The day after his return, however, Bashir announced that he would promulgate the presidential decrees to establish the TDRA on September 25. According to Minawi, the structure of the TDRA mandated under these decrees was more flawed than the NCP's original proposal and should have included the signers of the Declaration of Commitment.

17. (C) Presidential Advisor Nafie Ali Nafie told him that private negotiations could be held if Minawi did not voice his objections in public. Minawi said that Nafie and Al Khalifa are "feeding Bashir things to say under the table." He observed that Bashir is initially open to compromise but changes course after incitement from hard-liners. He said that these members of the ruling clique were also negotiating secretly with the NRF's Khalil Ibrahim and communicating with

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the NRF through Cairo.

18. (C) Nonetheless, Minawi said that President Bashir seemed more "relaxed" after his return from UNGA and had agreed to double the original compensation fund to 60 million dollars. Though Minawi said this was still less than half of the amount needed, he deemed it promising. He also said there was room to negotiate on the number of government posts for

Darfurians. Minawi characterized Vice President Ali Osman Taha as a more reasonable interlocutor than Nafie or Al Khalifa. "Ali Osman likes logic and will tell you logic," he said.
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